THE CHAPBOOK

(A MONTHLY MISCELLANY)

October 1922 Number 30

TWENTY NEW POEMS BY CONTEMPORARY POETS

THE POETRY BOOKSHOP, 35 DEVONSHIRE ST., THEOBALDS RD., LONDON, W.C.1

ONE SHILLING NE

THE CHAPBOOK (A Monthly Miscellany) first appeared in July, 1919. It is published on the first of each month. The following is a list of the numbers that have already appeared :

1919.

(1) JULY.—*Twenty-three New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*

(2) AUGUST.—*Decoration in the Theatre.* By Albert Rutherston. With four plates by the author.

(3) SEPTEMBER.—*Poems Newly Decorated :* An Anthology of miscellaneous poems of the past, with drawings by artists of the present.

(4) OCTOBER.—*Some French Poets of To-Day.* A commentary with specimens, by F. S. Flint.

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1920.

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(8) FEBRUARY.—*Modern Prose Literature :* A Critical Survey. (Under the Editorship of Alec Waugh.)

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(12) JUNE.—*A Bibliography of Modern Poetry, with Notes on some Contemporary Poets.* Compiled by Recorder.

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(14) AUGUST.—*Aria da Capo* : A Play in One Act by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

(15) SEPTEMBER.—*Old Broadside Ballads.* Collected and Edited, with Reproductions in facsimile, Cover Design, and Introduction by C. Lovat Fraser.

THE CHAPBOOK
(A MONTHLY MISCELLANY)

EDITED BY HAROLD MONRO

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ADDRESS : THE POETRY BOOKSHOP, 35 DEVONSHIRE STREET, THEOBALDS ROAD, LONDON, W.C.1.

I
(*Margaret Drew*)

A Paint-Box

THROUGH the glass house the sun pours
into the little tawny bodies of the
oranges on the wall.
Marigolds border the yellow gravel walks,
And through the golden curtains in a
window of the house a canary
sings in its gilt wire cage.

Poised in a hot and cloudless sky
An aeroplane hovers high over
brilliant leagues of Sea—
An azure Universe !

Salad in a jade bowl,
Pale-hued lettuce, sturdy cucumber,
crinkled cresses.
Through the kitchen window
the vegetable beds sleep in the Sun.

Red-backed books in a painted book-case,
A log fire glowing on a red-brick hearth,
Earthenware jars of geraniums
through the lattice panes,
White walls made lovely by
a Titian portrait.

The oak-settle of an inn,
Big rafters supporting the ceiling,
Men in corduroys with tanned skins
drinking good brown beer,
The mud of ploughed soil on their boots.
And high over the rich russet fields
A little brown lark ascending.

A cutting wind sweeps the busy street :
A woman, exquisite in purple and furs,
shopping, buying wine . . . amethysts . . .
An angular child in tattered boots
selling violets,
And passers-by, their noses
purple with the cold.

II

The Hedge

THERE is a Hedge in my life . . . .
It stands between myself and many things.
Grey and interminable at times this Hedge
Blots out the Sun and hides from me
The windy sky and the stars.
Sometimes the Hedge seems to stretch so far—
To tower so immensely high—
To become so thick-tangled with shadowy vegetation
I feel I shall never see Light again—
Never hold a flower . . . .
Then I cower beneath the dreadful mass of this Hedge
And weep . . . . and weep . . . .
I beat vainly with my hands,
But they feel thin and frail,
Weak little useless slices of flesh and bone.
The tears that tear at my eyes are stronger than they,
They are strong enough to drown the World !

This Hedge takes upon itself varied shapes.
At times when one most desires Beauty
This dreadful Barricade seems to be composed
of People . . . .
People !
There are thousands and millions of People in this Barricade.
And yet there is but one mind betwixt the lot.

They are brainless but they think they know.
They read newspapers and
The Book of the Universe is above them all the while.
They never raise their eyes.
They grow ill and puzzled over making gold,
And within their grasp
The cowslips bloom, the hayfields ripen, the Sun arises—
All golden things !

Sometimes I try to clamber through the Hedge—
To see the fields beyond—
There must be meadows white with sunshine . . . .
There must be, somewhere, Peace . . . .
But I cannot clamber through nor over this Hedge.
It is too strong for me.
At times it is not so high, nor so formidable,
One can almost see the sky,
But it is always there.
What *is* this Hedge ?
Is it . . . . Myself ? . . . .
I know there is blue and gold in the World—
Singing blue and gold !
Yet somehow I cannot see quite distinctly,
Perhaps my eyes are too wet . . . .

There is a Hedge in my life . . . .
It stands between myself and many things.

III

A Song of Hate

I HATE the heat of a motor-bus,
And the clatter and fuss
Of a terminus.
I hate a street
In Summer heat.
I hate the critics who poke and pry
Into poetry—
I wonder why
When beauty is laid at their feet
Their sneer is complete.

I hate those people who love not trees
And wind and a breeze.
I hate their souls—
Let them rust !
I hate the hunters who kill big game,
For all their aim
Is to turn fine lives into dust.

I hate the smell of beer and the face of a man
Who has drunk as much as he can,
His face is vile
And his smile !
And a brawling fight in a slum—
Men rowdy with rum,
I wonder they think the blows and the blood
Worth while.

I hate washing greasy plates,
I hate long waits,
I hate paying taxes and rates,
I hate the United States.
I have many loves,
But these are my hates.

IV

The Corridor

BLUE gloom in a corridor of shadows,
In a long, long corridor. . . .
Outside there is Wind in the World—
Wind ! Blowing the round clouds
along and ruffling the sea like the
blue breast of a bird !
Here in this endless corridor where
the light never enters
I am frightened—
A dreadful depression seizes me—
The gloom is so thick !
There are no doors—
This corridor is too long !
Outside the Wind is whipping
the World round like a top !
On the yellow common the
children fly their kites high—high !
White washing is drying in the yellow sunlight,
The Wind sucks and pulls at
the yielding linen, bellying in
the folds like the sails of yachts.
Here in this terrible corridor
there is no movement—no sound.
One might walk for ever.
High up in the blue gloom there
must be a ceiling,
But it is too high for me to see,
And I feel sure there are no
doors in this corridor.
Outside in the whistling Wind
the tall trees are scraping

the sky, and birds are blown
like twigs about the fields.
On the Sea the little waves
are pointed like pierrots' caps
and the smoke of the great
steamers smudges the sky.
Here ! O here in this awful
corridor the gloom is deeper :
The walls are so narrow,
the air so oppressive.
I fear madness may come upon me.
I cannot walk for ever—
pacing Eternity !
Outside in this tremendous Wind
the strong young horses canter
through the gorse,
The big clouds curl and plume
in the blue as though horses'
hoofs had scattered them.
In this corridor I can see
nothing—it is dark . . . all dark—
. . . . I am very tired.
Outside the Night is coming ;
The children have gone in
from play,
The young horses have ceased
to canter.
The dry gorse on the common
sings hoarsely in the Wind.
The sky is black and the
Wind never rests.
I still pace the corridor—
a corridor of shadows . . . . a long
. . . . long . . . . corridor. . . .

V

(*H. H. Abbott*)

The Bowler

THE field is spread out before me
Like green tapestry, swathed in gold
Inwoven with pale figures.
They are my men, they await me ;
They do my bidding.
Meticulously my opponent takes his guard.
(It is my brain and hand and eye to his.)
The umpire draws back.
I pace out my run,
And turn suddenly to the attack.
In my fingers I grip the hard seam
Of the moist red leather ball :
Covetously I grip it
(Yet tenderly, very tenderly).
Oh, the joy of the run to the wicket,
The rhythmical swing of arm and body,
The deft flick of the wrist,
The swift turn of the fingers
As they spin the ball !
The cunning regulated pace,
The modulated pitch of the ball !
Swiftly it swings towards the batsman.
(Will it turn ?)
It whips back.
(Have I done it ?)
I see the downrush of the bat,
The flying stump, the spinning bails.
I am filled with proud yet quiet joy.
My men gather round me.
Discomfited the batsman turns away,
His eyes to the ground.
Lovingly I caress the ball in my hands.
(I wonder what the next man will be like ?)

VI

The Batsman

THAT left-hand bowler keeps a good length.
It is hot here in the pavilion.
The sun dazzles and tries the eyes.
That was a good shot.
Another wicket.

I suppose I ought to get my pads on.
This strap is too tight : I'll loosen it.
I hope this man keeps in.
I won't smoke any more, thank you.
The left-hander seems very troublesome :
I believe he's breaking in from leg.
Doesn't the air feel close ?
What ? Another wicket ?

Where are my hat and gloves ?
I suppose I should be going out.
The elastic of my batting glove seems stretched.
I wish they wouldn't clap.
What a long way to the wickets !
How the other team stare.
They are going to their places.
What a mess they've made of the crease !
" Left-hand round the wicket."
" Two-leg ? Thank you."
" Five balls to come."
I must play out the over.
I hope his arm keeps on the screen.
Hm ! That was near.
He swings a little.
" Over."
Thank God for that.

VII
(*V. T. Coats*)

Electric Light

OH little room of mine, be still—
I would not come against thy will
Nor on thy secrets would I spy
With sudden, swift, bewildering eye.
Those gently gathered shadows keep
Safe, as softly folded sheep.
I, with a " By your leave," would steal
Calmly across the threshold, feel
Some kindly presence, welcoming me—
Then strike a light, and faintly see
The happy shadows dancing by
To the far corners, silently.
My glimmering light spreads far and near,
Darkness retreats, yet without fear,
And still abides, with pleasant gloom,
In the dim corners of my room. . . .

Alas ! I had forgotten quite
That foe of gloom, electric light.
Electric light, pride of our day,
Soon drives the wistful shades away.
This light must, with a sudden snap,
Flood all the room, as water tap
Turned on fills basin. But, recall,
Water is raiment magical,
While light serves only to lay bare
The thing that is already there—
Too oft doth curse instead of bless,
Revealing nought but nakedness.
For see, this room we gaze upon
Is nought but chairs and tables—gone
The lovely shades, the mystic breath
Of Life. There's nothing here but Death.

It has a rude and staring look
As of some garish picture-book.
Like an invading force you come
With blast of trumpet, beat of drum :
So the light bursts upon the room.
You win it ?—Nay, the lovely gloom
Is gone. Its soul is put to flight—
Empty it lies, beneath the Light.

VIII
(*Camilla Doyle*)

The Rabbit

ALL day this spring—the first he's known—
He lets himself be sideways blown
When the wind comes ; he'll leap and pounce,
And try to rush two ways at once,
On feet that catch the very sound
Cascades make spattering to the ground.
Though men with difficulty sing how soon
They die, how seldom living they can thrive,
He makes a little dancing-tune
By only being alive ;
No leaf that April wind blows off the tree
Falls and leaps round again so gay as he.

IX
(*H. K. Cassels*)

Abdication

LISTEN, reckless queen of tournaments
That splintered the angry spears of great crusaders !
Listen, inspiriter of accomplishments
And dispenser of the glories that betrayed us.

There is no quiet corner of wise silence
That does not boast your kinship as a treasure ;
There is no splendour in the black heart of battle
That has not borrowed gallantry from your pleasure.

Listen then, in this moment of your meekness !
The secret of your Empire has been betrayed ;
The impregnable citadel has shown a weakness ;
A god has walked beside us in the shade ;

The north pole has come to harness with the magnet ;
There is no sun to give bearings now by day ;
Democracy has become General of an Army ;
The tournament has become a wild melée.

But listen ! though the mob shows consternation
And clamours confusedly for a guiding star,
Through the pilgrims goes a murmur of elation
And they sing anthems to greet you as you are.

X

Nocturne

NO sound ; moon ; great boughs across the sky ;
Grey leaves that tremble in clear pools ahigh ;
Stillness, penetrating the limpid dark ;
Coldness ; loneliness ; wonder ; empty ; stark.

A whisper like thunder in the gulf of sound ;
A break ; a stir ; a rustle as soon drowned ;
Shadows too swiftly changing to define
Any clear image or their delicate line.

Weak evening creatures fitfully still stir ;
Bats dartle ; a bird passes ; moths whirr.
From the fine intricacy of one stiff branch
One leaf falls through leaves, an avalanche !

Soft stirrings ; hosts of threatening pigmy sounds,
Spears of the savage army that surrounds.
Clarity stifles ; smother of such throng
Muffles brave night, wild space and its shrill song.

Night is a tiger, burning, huge, fierce ;
She has stars ; stars are cruel ; stars pierce.
Fear comes in secret voluptuous disguise ;
Cold creeps ; loneliness takes a giant size.

Effort constrained ; attention disciplined ;
Sense roused ; the gentle touch of almost wind ;
Murmur of grasses ; tree-trunks ; the dark stare
Through boughs of the vast emptiness of air.

No form, no spirit in the indifferent sky ;
But depth ; cold stillness ; vastness, remote, high.
Again silence ; clouds flying ; moon through trees
And grey leaves trembling in the noiseless breeze.

XI
(*P. W. Chaple*)

A Good-bye

WE'D quarrelled overnight, and since next day
I left for town, and earlier than I,
She was to go about her day's affairs,
We'd said a cold " Good-bye."
Late as it was,
Bed brought me, sick and sad and wearied out,
Scant hopes of rest and scantier hopes of sleep;
Yet one could read. But no ! For all the while
Between the printed page and my sick brain
The fluttering impish phrases, mocking me,
Danced dervish-wise, and when their sport grew stale
Scampered derisive into nothingness.
Tiring at last, I flung aside my book
And in the darkness, till along the east
The first grey glimmered, conned the sorry lore
Night writes so large in characters of fire
On the dark vestments of her ponderous hours
For sleepless souls to read and weary of.
Right leisurely against my window pane
Dawn patterned out a wondrous harmony,
Soft, sweet and cool, so that it soothed like sleep;
And made meet birthrobes for an autumn day.
Three colours in that glowing fabric stood—
Black, white and rose—and there were always three;
Shift as they would and change their places, die—
Die and come new to birth, they kept the same—
Black, white and rose. . . .
I started suddenly
Thinking I heard a tapping at my door,

Yet I could not be sure, because the sound—
If sound there were—was little noisier
Than the soft fluttering thumps one hears by night
When big white moths come charging from the dark
Against the windows of a lighted room.
Again the tapping, so I called, " Come in ! "
And circling without sound, in swung the door—
Back circling swung, and *she* was in my room.
Full in the light she stood, a thing of light ;
Lithe, strong and swift and clean and flower-fresh,
So that she might have stepped straight from the sky :
The Spirit of the Dawn. And quaint it was.
Dressed for the street already, she had donned
Black skirt, rose jersey, and a snowy hat :
Her colours were the Dawn's—black, white and rose.
And though till now I'll swear that silk-soft sky
Had shown no faintest fleeting fleck of gold,
From somewhere, somehow, suddenly it found
Enough to put a halo round her hair,
So that gold-crowned she crossed the room to me—
No sprite, but better—gracious flesh and blood.
Yet was the glory fickle, for it fled
Next moment, while with fingers fair and fleet
Within the shadow by my bed she stood
Teasing my tangled hair to seemliness,
Before, like twin swift birds all dusky gold
That stoop to find their perch, her hands sank soft
And took my shoulders. Then my hands unbid
Stole up towards her scarce knowing what they sought,
Till, laughing out a merry little laugh,
She pounced, and seized and safely prisoned them.
Her lips brushed soft my forehead, touched again—
Mine found her cheek, and so " Good-bye ! " she said.

A touch, a kiss, " Good-bye ! " and that was all.
And that was all. Yet still through life, through death—
Through other lives, if other lives there be—
I know that I shall carry on my brow
The pressure of her lips. Through life, through death—
Through other lives, if other lives there be—
My hands will feel the pressure of her hands.

XII
(*L. A. Pavey*)

On a Pleasant Nameless Town

OLD houses in a wide and sunny street,
Bridges with lazy water running through,
And cunning cafés where good friends might meet,
I can remember you—

You were set fast beneath a white-capped height,
Built wide and sure and strong in the good earth,
Still, in the hush of that late evening light
A home of ancient mirth.

And though your name is mazed with the unknown,
And will not haunt my brief and wayward dreams,
They yet shall find the land where rich and lone
And still your beauty gleams.

XIII

(*Roy Humpherson*)

A Tavern Tale

THE little old man in the corner
Pulled his old pipe away ;
He thoughtfully spat on the floor
And he scraped the sawdust o'er.
Then he sipped his beer
With a thin little leer,
And puffed at his black old clay.
But never a word he said,
So quiet that he might have been dead,
The little old man in the corner.

There was Jack o' the hill and Shepherd Bill
And Dan come home from the sea ;
There were dalesmen three from Hatchety Lea,
And Granfer Brown and me.

So we dragged our chairs around the blaze
And we saw that our pipes were trim,
And we filled the room with a smoky haze,
And our glasses up to the brim.

Now a man will air his point of view,
(With a pipe of his favourite brand),
To a very select and favoured few,
When his glass is full in his hand.

So the talk went on with shakes and nods
From sheep to honey bees,
Till it drifted round to Man and his Gods,
And man's Philosophies.

Then up spoke Jack o' the hill, " To me
'Tis plain to see for all
Who puts his faith in God," said he,
" Is riding for a fall."

" Not so," cried Shepherd Bill. " To those
Who have the eyes to see
God always will Himself disclose
In every flower and tree."

Then Granfer Brown took out his pipe,
And spoke up in his turn :
" The sheep He'll take when time is ripe ;
The goats in hell He'll burn."

Quoth Dan : " The monkeys in the trees
Are Gods. I had a peep
At many sinful imageries . . ."
The dalesmen were asleep.

The little old man in the corner
Finished his beer
With a thin little leer
And hobbled to his feet.

He paused, with his hand on the door,
Thoughtfully to spit on the floor,
And carefully scrape the sawdust o'er—
" When ye are dead, ye are dead,"
(And he spat)—
" Deader than that."—
And he hobbled into the street.

XIV

The Diner

(*Piccadilly Grill*)

THEY say he found,
'Twixt oysters and soup,
Some strange Philosophy ;
Some meaning in a good consommé,
And an answer to all his wish
'Twixt the soup and the fish.
They say that subtle point
Between entrée and joint
Crowned his Philosophy—
Till all was fled
At the dinner's ending.
They say he lost his gastronomic soul
In the vague waters of a finger bowl,
Elusive, and it slipped away and far
In the faint blue smoke of his cigar.

XV
(*H. Wolfe*)

This Poet and That Poet

SAID this poet to that poet
" What do you lack ? "
Said that poet to this poet
" Friend, scratch my back ! "

Said this poet to that poet
" What if I do ? "
Said that poet to this poet
" I will scratch you."

XVI

(*Harold Lewis-Cook*)

Mother and Son

HOW long she trod the circle life had drawn,
How long had ceased to dream what lay beyond
The door of circumstance that kept in pawn
Those years of hers (when she might not command
An hour's release from toil, an hour apart——),
How long it was she recognised the day
She failed to know what beauty stirred his heart,
What pressed such silence on him that to say
What tortured him he could not. Sick with shame,
He, knowing now that his first bridge was burned,
And she, uncertain how to stay the flame,
They parted ; he, still wild and sullen turned,
Dream-hunting, to the world, and she to sit
Till twilight come and she be part of it.

XVII Never, Never did I Dream . . .

I NEVER thought that I should walk
In ecstasy the streets of town,
Or find a heart more beautiful
Than red leaves fluttering down.

I did not know archangels pass
In human guise among the trees,
And never, never did I dream
That I should walk with these.

But by my side one went to-day ;
I saw, and I had speech with him.
And I forgot, who ne'er forgot,
How cold are streets, and grim !

XVIII
(*J. A. Cowdray*)

SLEEP on the hillside, all alone,
While the winds play on the steep :
Sleep on the hillside, all alone,
While the waves play on the deep :
You will not hear their mirth or moan
Up on the hillside, all alone,
Asleep.

The foam-flecked waters heave and gleam
Under a cloud-flecked sky ;
The gorse glows in a golden dream
While the seagulls wheel and cry ;
You will not hear their mournful scream :
Wrapped in a sleep that holds no dream
You lie.

Out on the hillside, all alone,
Only by rough winds fanned,
You'll sigh no more for a friendly tone
Or a hand to clasp your hand :
You who walked on the earth alone
Sleep in a wide world all your own
Sky-spanned.

XIX
(*Maxwell Anderson*)

Mazurka

(To Anna)

REVENGE !
The grey lights shatter
From whirling blades. . . .
Turn to me, give me a song,
I am away at last,
Let it be brief or long,
O God, keep me mad !
Keep me mad as the storm,
Hurl me, quivering, glad,
Pit me against the sea,
Against the night !

War is evil,
The light is dying,
My arms are heavy,
My friends are dust ;
The banners stirring,
The trumpets crying
Drive us hellward,
Urge us to lust.
Turn to me, give me a song—
War is evil . . .
Let it be brief or long—
My friends are dust . . .
Keep me mad as the storm
And the trumpets crying,
Pit me against the sea,
Urge me to lust !

Pit me against the sea,
The light is dying,
War is evil ;
Turn to me, lift me, give me a song,
My arms are heavy, the banners stir,
Revenge !
Blood is salt on the lips,
Pit me against the sea,
Hurl me, quivering, glad,
Keep me mad as the storm,
O God, keep me mad !

XX
(*John Macleod*)

On the Liner

GOOD-BYE. Far back the shore lights disappear
Swallowed in surge. I shall come home, my dear,
In four years, if I live, and, if I die,
In less. So, till we meet again, good-bye.

(16) OCTOBER.—*Sixteen New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*

(17) NOVEMBER.—*The Younger French Poets.* By F. S. Flint.

(18) DECEMBER.—*Three Songs : A Christmas Carol.* Words by John Masefield, Music by Malcolm Davidson. *Full Moon.* Words by Walter de la Mare, Music by Scott Goddard. *Desire in Spring.* Words by Francis Ledwidge, Music by Ivor Gurney.

1921.

(19) JANUARY.—*Eleven New Poems by Contemporary Poets,* together with *Certain Prose Epigrams,* and a *Note* by Robert Bridges.

(20) FEBRUARY.—*Puppets and Poets.* By E. Gordon Craig, with several Decorations and five full-page designs.

(21) MARCH.—*A House* (*Modern Morality Play*). By Ford Madox Hueffer. With several Decorations.

(22) APRIL.—*Prose in Poetry* (*Three Essays*). By T. S. Eliot, Frederic Manning and Richard Aldington.

(23) MAY.—*Nineteen Poems by Contemporary Poets,* also *Pathology des Dommagistes.*

(24) JUNE.—*A List of* 101 *Commendable Plays,* ancient and modern, with notes, for the use of Dramatic Societies, etc.

1922.

(25) FEBRUARY.—*Twelve New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*

(26) MAY.—*Seventeen New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*

(27) JULY.—*Three Questions and Twenty-Seven Answers regarding the Necessity, the Function, and the Form of Poetry.*

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